Nowadays, many opinions about Dha‘eef Hadith are circulating. Needless to say, very few of them are correct. Herein we present some facts about Dha’eef Hadith in the opinions of the Hadith-experts

By virtue of its relationship with the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam), every Hadith is worthy of deductions being drawn from it, in which there cannot be any doubt of weakness. However, the people who are in the chain of authority from the Successors (*Taba'een*) to the Hadith-experts narrating the Hadith have weak memory or suffer from any of the drawbacks, which have been described by the Hadith-experts, then the chain of authority of that Hadith will be termed as weak (*Dha'eef*).

For this reason, the Hadith-experts have written that when the weakness of a narration has to be described, it will not be termed as weak with respect to its substance matter and neither will it be described simply as "weak," but it will be said that this Hadith is weak with this chain of narration or that this Hadith is weak with respect to its chain of narration. This is what Imam Suyuti (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written in *Tadreeb Ur Rawi Fi Sharhi Taqreeb An Nawawi*.

Now the question that whether a weakly authenticated Hadith can be acted upon or not. It should be remembered that every weakly authenticated Hadith is not to be ignored at all times. In many cases, it is acceptable and in spite of having a weak chain of authority, such Hadith are acted upon.

A weakly authenticated Hadith is acceptable in issues of excellence

All the Hadith experts are in consensus that in matters of excellence (*Fadhaail*), a weakly authenticated Hadith is to be acted upon. Thus, Imam Abu Zakariyya Mohiuddin Yahya Bin Sharaf Nawawi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has clarified this at various places in his writings:

Translation: The scholars of the Ummah all hold that it is permissible to act upon a weakly authenticated Hadith in matters of excellence. (*Sharh Al Arba'een An Nawawiyya, Muqaddima, Al Majmu' Sharh Ul Muhadhhab*)

A weakly authenticated Hadith becomes "Hasan Lighairhi" because of multiple chains of narration

Not one person from among the Imams of the criticism of Hadith has declared such Hadith to be false or fabricated. On the other hand, these Imams have clarified that when there are other Hadith supporting a Weak Hadith, then this Hadith does not remain Weak anymore, but becomes *Hasan Lighairihi*, which is worthy of being acted upon.

Hadhrat Mulla 'Ali Qari (May Allah shower His mercy on him) says:

Translation: Multiple chains of narration make a weakly authenticated Hadith *Hasan* (Fairly-authenticated). (*Mirqaatul Mafateeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Babu Ma La Yajoozu Minal 'Amali Fis Salaat*, Vol. 2, Pg. No. 42)

'Allama Zainuddin Muhammad Abdur Raoof Munawi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes:

Translation: If all these Hadith are considered to be weak then because of the multiplicity of the chains of narration, a weakly authenticated Hadith becomes strong and reliable. Only a person who is unaware of the science of Hadith or is prejudiced can deny this. (Faiz Ul Qadeer Sharh Jame' Sagheer)

Hadhrat Shah 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes:

Translation: If there are multiple chains of narration of a Weak Hadith, which compensate for its unreliability, then that Hadith will be known as *Hasan Lighairihi*. (*Muqaddima Fi Usool Il Hadith Lish Shaykh 'Abdul Haq Dehlvi*)

The Ummah's acceptance of a Hadith is a sign of the Hadith's authenticity

The Imams of Hadith have written that because of *Talaqqi Bil Qubool*, a Hadith is

strengthened. ‘Allama Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Jamaluddin (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written:

Translation: A Hadith which the Ummah has accepted is sure to be rigorously authenticated *(Sahih)*. (*An Nikatu ‘Ala Muqaddima Ibn Salah Tambeeh*)

‘Allama Ibn Salah has written at another place:

Translation: When a weakly authenticated Hadith is accepted by the Ummah, then it will be acted upon as is the authoritative opinion.

Imam Suyuti (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written in *Tadreeb Ur Rawi*:

Translation: When people accept a Hadith, then it will be judged to be rigorously authenticated *(Sahih)* even though its chain of narration may not be rigorously authenticated. (*Tadreeb ur Rawi Lis Suyuti Al Awwal Us Sahih*)

Thus, if a Hadith reaches the status of *Talaqqi Bil Qubool*, talking about its reliability or unreliability and investigation about its narrators is entirely unnecessary. For this reason, the unreliability of some narrators will not affect the deductions drawn from this Hadith.

Imam Shamsuddin Sakhawi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written:

Translation: When the Ummah accepts a Weak Hadith, then as per the authoritative opinion, it will be acted upon, so much that it is of the status of a *Mutawatir* (frequently occurring) Hadith, which can abrogate the *Nas Qata'ee* (the canonical proofs) (*Fathul Mugheeth Sharhu Alfiyatil Hadith Fi Ma'arifati Man Tuqbalu Riwayatuhoo Wa Man Turaddu*)

The deduction of a jurist is a proof of the authenticity of the Hadith

The 4 Imams have deduced from the previously mentioned Hadith. If a jurist (*Mujtahid*) performs a deduction based on the

Hadith, then this is a sign of the Hadith's authenticity and reliability. 'Allama Ibn Nujaim Misri (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written:

Translation: When a jurist performs a deduction from a Hadith, then this deduction is a sign that this Hadith is rigorously authenticated *(Sahih)*. Therefore, after a deduction of a jurist, no other proof is needed for the reliability of a Hadith. (*Al Bahr Ur Raiq Sharhu Kanz Ud Daqaaiq, Kitab Ul Bay'ah Faslun Yadkhulul Binaau Wal Mafateehu Fi Bai'ddaar*)

The unreliability of the later narrators does not affect Imam Azam Abu Hanifa's opinion

The research of narrators, etc. is necessary for those who have deduced from those Hadith in whose chain of narration some unreliable narrator (*Rawi*) is present. If some Hadith-experts consider that particular narrator as unreliable, even then the

deduction of Imam Azam Abu Hanifa is not affected by this, because Imam Azam (May Allah shower His mercy on him) is among the 5th class of the narrators (*Sighar Taba'een*). He passed away in 150 Hijri. It is obvious that the unreliability that seeps in the later ages does not affect the opinion of the earlier masters.

Imam Abdul Wahab Sha'araani (May Allah shower His mercy on him) says:

Translation: If any deduction of Imam Azam's school of thought is considered unreliable, then this unreliability is of the narrators who come into the chain of narration after Imam Azam. (*Meezan Ush Sharia'til Kubra*)

If weakly authenticated Hadith should be left out.........

The non-followers (*Ghair Muqallideen*) claim to act only upon rigorously authenticated *(Sahih)* Hadith and if there is even a slight degree of unreliability in a Hadith, they don't accept it and demand a rigorously authenticated Hadith. However, they also act upon Weak Hadith. We are presenting some examples here, which will show the truth about their claim of acting "only" on rigorously-authenticated Hadith.

Hadith about having 2 witnesses for marriage is weak

The Hadith from which the non-followers deduce the necessity of having 2 witnesses for marriage is not rigorously authenticated with respect to its chain of narration, but is weakly authenticated (*Dha'eef*). The necessity of having 2 witnesses is deduced from the following Hadith:

Translation: Marriage is valid only with the permission of the guardian (*Wali*) in the presence of 2 witnesses.

Imam Daraqutni has mentioned this Hadith in his *Sunan*. In the chain of narration of Imam Daraqutni, there is ‘Abdullah bin Muhriz about whom Imam Ibn Hajr ‘Asqalani has written:

Translation: ‘Abdullah bin Muhriz is a very unreliable narrator. (*Lisan Ul Meezaan Li Ibn Hajr ‘Asqalani*)

A very famous and authoritative scholar of the non-followers Siddiq bin Hasan Qanuji writes in *Ar Rauzatun Nadiyya* after mentioning this Hadith:

Translation: In the chain of narration of this Hadith, there is ‘Abdullah bin Muhriz who is a Forsaken Narrator (*Matruk Rawi*, from whom narration of Hadith has been abandoned). (*Ar Rauzatun Nadiyya*, *Kitab Un Nikah*, Vol. 2, Pg. No. 22)

In another chain of narration of this Hadith, there is ‘Adi bin Fadhl about whom Imam Baihaqui (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes:

Translation: 'Adi bin Fadhl has narrated this although he is unreliable. With a rigorously authenticated chain of narration, this is a *Mauquf Hadith* (A Hadith whose chain of narration goes back only to a *Taba'ee*). (Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, *Kitab Un Nikah, Babu La Nikaha Illa Bi Waliyyin Murshidin*, Vol. 7, Pg. No. 202, Hadith No. 13494)

Imam Ibn Hajr 'Asqalani (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written in *At Talkhees Ul Habeer* about the same narrator:

Translation: 'Adi Bin Fadhl is an unreliable narrator. (*At Talkhees Ul Habeer Li Ibn Hajr Il 'Asqalani Kitab Un Nah 'Anil Khitbati 'Alal Khitbah Babul Auliyai Wa Ahkaamihim*)

'Allama Haithami (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes after mentioning 2 Hadith of the same meaning on the authority of Imam Tabarani:

Translation: In the chains of narration of both these Hadith, Rab'ee bin Badr is there who is a Forsaken Narrator. (*Majma Uz Zawaaid Wa Mamba 'Ul Fawaaid Lil*

Haithami, Kitab Un Nikah, Babu Ma Ja'a Lil Waliyyi Wash Shuhood, Vol. 4, Pg. No. 526, Hadith No. 7520)

Also Hafidh Ibn Hajr 'Asqalani (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has declared Rab'ee bin Badr as Forsaken Narrator. (*Taqreeb Ut Tahzeeb Li Ibn Hajr Il 'Asqalani Dhikru Manismuhoo Raba'ah*)

'Allama Abu Ja'afar 'Uqeeli (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has written in his book "*Dhu'afaa*" about Rab'ee bin Badr:

Translation: Imam Qutaiba has declared him unreliable. (*Adh Dhu'afaa Lil 'Uqaili, Babur Ra*)

'Allama Haithami (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes after mentioning another Hadith of Mo'jam Tabarani:

Translation: In this chain of narration, Suleman bin Arqam is there who is a Forsaken Narrator. (*Majma Uz Zawaaid Wa Mamba 'Ul Fawaaid Lil Haithami, Kitab Un Nikah, Babu Ma Ja'a Lil Waliyyi Wash*

Shuhood, Vol. 4, Pg. No. 526, Hadith No. 7521)

Imam Nasai has included Suleman bin Arqam in unreliable narrators. (*Adh Dhu'afaa Wal Matrukeen Lin Nasai Babus Seen*)

Imam Dhahabi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has mentioned the opinion of the experts of Hadith criticism about Suleman bin Arqam in *Meezan Ul 'Itidaal*:

Translation: The Hadith-experts have stopped narrating from him….Imam Ahmed says: We don't narrate on his authority. Imam 'Abbas and Imam 'Uthman have narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een that he is unreliable. 'Allama Jauzjani said: Suleman bin Arqam is *Saqit Ul 'Itibaar* (Totally Unreliable). Imam Abu Dawood and Imam Daraqutni have said that he is a Forsaken Narrator. (*Meezaan Ul 'Itidaal Lidh Dhahabi, Babu Daal Taa Seen, Suleman bin Arqam*, Vol. 2, Pg. No. 196)

In spite of so many objections and reservations on this Hadith, the non-followers deduce from it. A question here is if the *Marfu' Hadith* (Hadith whose chain of authority goes back to the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)) of 20 Raka'at of Taraweeh is weak and thus unacceptable, then how does the Hadith of 2 witnesses for marriage become acceptable to them in spite of being weak?

The Hadith of a year having to pass before giving Zakaat on wealth is not rigorously authenticated

Among the conditions for the Zakaat to become Wajib (compulsory) is that a year should pass on the wealth. This condition is compulsory in the opinion of the non-followers as well. The Hadith used to prove this is weakly authenticated. Imam Baihaqui has written:

Translation: Zakaat does not become Wajib on any wealth until a year has passed on it……………In the chain of narration of this Hadith, there is Haritha, on whose narrations

deductions cannot be based. In this issue, the Traditions narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq, Hadhrat 'Uthman, Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and other Companions are considered. (*As Sunan Ul Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Uz Zakaat, Babu La Zakaata Fi Malin Hatta Yahoola 'Alaihil Haul*, Vol. 4, Pg. No. 160, Hadith No. 7274)

Another Hadith of the same meaning has come from A'asim bin Dhamra and Imam Baihaqui writes about him:

Translation: A'asim bin Dhamra (i.e. his narrations are) not worthy of being deduced from. (*As Sunan Ul Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Us Salaat, Babu Mabdai Fardhit Tashhahud*)

He also said:

Translation: Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin Mubarak (May Allah shower His mercy on him) has declared him unreliable. (*As Sunan Ul Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Us Salaat, Babul Khabaril Ladhee Ja'a Fis Salaat*)

Another Hadith in this context is narrated on the authority of Harith bin ‘Abdullah. Imam Baihaqui (May Allah shower His mercy on him) clarifies about this:

Translation: Harith A’awar is unreliable. (*As Sunan Ul Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Ut Taharah, Babu Man’it Tatahhuri Bin Nabeedh*)

It has been mentioned on the authority of Imam Sha’abi:

Translation: Imam Sha’abi has said that Harith is a liar. (*As Sunan Ul Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Ul Qasama, Babu Aslil Qasamati Wal Bida’ati Feeha*)

‘Allama Haithami writes after mentioned a similar Hadith in Mo’jam Tabarani:

Translation: In the chain of narration of this Hadith, there is ‘Ambasa bin ‘Abdur Rahman who is an unreliable narrator. (*Majma Uz Zawaaid Wa Mamba’ Ul Fawaaid Kitab Uz Zakaat, Babu Mata Tajibuz Zakaat*)

Thus, the *Marfu' Hadith* of 1 year having to pass for the Zakaat to become Wajib is not free of unreliability, but still the non-followers base their deductions on it.

All Hadith about the minimum measure of gold for Zakaat are weakly authenticated

The Hadith mention 20 *Mithqaal* as the minimum amount of gold on which Zakaat becomes Wajib. Even the non-followers accept this, as given in *Maqalaat Wa Fatawa Abdul Aziz bin 'Abdullah bin Baz*, Pg. No. 257 although there is no rigorously authenticated Hadith about this. Imam Nawawi (May Allah shower His mercy on him) writes:

Translation: In the rigorously authenticated Hadith, there is no clarification of the minimum amount of gold. There are Hadith about this which give it as 20 *Mithqaal*. However, they are all unreliable. However, reliable jurists have come to a consensus on this. (*Sharhu Sahih Muslim Lin Nawawi, Kitab Uz Zakaat*, Vol. 1, Pg. No. 316)

For this, there is no *Marfu' Hadith* with a rigorously authenticated chain of narration. In spite of it, the non-followers declare the minimum amount of gold to be 20 *Mithqaal*. Is this not acting upon a Weak Hadith?

These 3 issues have been presented as an example to show that in spite of a rigorously authenticated *Marfu' Hadith* not being there for them, the non-followers still act upon these Hadith.

(1) The *Marfu' Hadith* about 2 witnesses for marriage is narrated with a weakly authenticated chain of narration. There is no Hadith with a rigorously authenticated chain of narration. So, in this issue, is deduction based on the Traditions of the Companions enough? When the Traditions can become a proof for this issue, then why cannot the rigorously authenticated Traditions of the Companions become a proof apart from the Marfu' Hadith?

(2) The Hadith-experts have clarified that there is no rigorously authenticated *Marfu'*

Hadith about 1 year having to pass on the wealth for Zakaat to become compulsory on it. The narrations from the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) have weakly authenticated chains of narrations. However, there are Traditions of Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq and other Companions, because of which this issue becomes authoritative. Our question still remains. When the Hadith about this are weakly authenticated, then how is the deduction performed on the basis of a Weak Hadith? If deduction from the Traditions of the Companions in support of a weakly authenticated Hadith is correct, then even if we consider the *Marfu' Hadith* of Taraweeh to be Weak, why aren't the Traditions of the Companions acceptable?

(3) That the minimum amount of gold on which Zakaat becomes Wajib is 20 *Mithqaal* is not mentioned in any rigorously authenticated Hadith. As per the clarification of Imam Nawawi, all the Hadith which say this are Weak. However, the jurists have a consensus about it. Their consensus strengthens this Hadith.

Although rigorously authenticated and *Marfu' Hadith* about these issues are not there, the non-followers have accepted these. In their books, these issues are written in this manner only. They issue edicts on this only.

This shows that they accept the Traditions of the Companions although they don't acknowledge it. The consensus of the jurists has weight with them as a proof though they don't admit it. If it is not so, then what proof do they have to follow the aforementioned rules? As per their principles, what is the justification for doing so?

Can they present a clear and rigorously authenticated Hadith of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) without needing to recourse to the Traditions of the Sahabah and the consensus of the jurists?

The literature of the non-followers is silent about presenting a *Marfu' Hadith* about these issues.

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